Name_____
Date_____

EVALUATE A PRIMARY SOURCE

1. Which selection from "Dreams of a Barefoot Boy" did you just read? _____
   _____

2. What did you learn about life in a Midwestern town in 1900?_____
   _____
   _____

3. Write three questions about life in 1900 that were not answered in the reading selection.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

4. Look at the document you've been given. *What* type of primary source is it?

____official record	____photograph/film	____cartoon
____letter	____map	____poster
____diary/journal	____artwork	____sound recording
____reminiscence	____advertisement	____artifact
____oral history	____newspaper	____book

5. Carefully examine the document and describe what you see (dates, stamps, names, notations, numbers, symbols, etc.). _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. *Who* created this document? _____

7. *Why* do you think this document was created? _____
   _____

8. For *whom* was this document intended? _____

9. List three things you learned about life at this time in history by studying this document.
   a. _____
   b. _____
   c. _____

10. Write three new questions that you now have about the subject.
    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____

*This worksheet was modified from the original developed by the Education Staff, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408.

Home & Family

Birth Record, Family Bible, (museum?) (AV has photo, # 68-81)

1905 Letter to Nettie Stover from DDE (AV has photo, #73-374) (Note: might want to use original for scanning?)

Milton Eisenhower Oral History, pp. 1-4, pp.17(?)—19, pp. 23-24

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 23-25, p. 29

L. J. Asper Oral History, p. 2, pp.16-17

Nettie Stover Jackson Oral Histoy, p. 17, p. 20, pp. 23-26, pp. 36-39

Recipes from Ida Stover Eisenhower, "Puddin' " and "Paun Haas"

Recipes from DDE, "Chile Con Carne" and "Old-Fashioned Beef Stew"

Diagram of Eisenhower Yard—1898, Endacott Records (Scan my copy.)

Diagram of Eisenhower Yard—1947, Endacott Records (Scan my copy.)

Water Permit (1907) for Eisenhower home, Endacott Records (Do we have the original?)

Application for Sewer Permit (1908) for Eisenhower home, Endacott Records (Do we have the original?)

Photos:

- Can't find photo #, Unidentified group (probably Eisenhower extended family) of 5 men, two little boys, little girl, and (DDE and David Eisenhower) c. 1906-07
- 64-172 David, Idea, 3 of Eisenhower sons, and DDE's dog, Flip
- 64-167-2 Four Eisenhower brothers (Arthur, Edgar, Dwight, and Roy) 1893
- 62-319 David, Ida, and all six boys, 1902
- 62-319-A DDE, cropped from above photo
- 62-296 House on 2nd St. with four boys out front (Arthur, Edgar, Dwight, and Paul) 1895-96? (Note: Paul died in 1896)
- Get exterior and interior photos of the Eisenhower home from the museum

School & Education

DDE's High School Diploma (museum) (AV has photo of it, #63-32)

Orin Snider Oral History, pp. 2-4, p. 6, pp. 23-25, p. 28, pp. 34-36, pp. 44-47

Six McDonnell Oral History, pp. 10-11

Lelia Grace Picking Oral History, pp. 2-3, pp. 7-10

John E. Long letter of March 6, 1970, (reminiscence), pp. 4-6.

The First Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with this written in: Mary Smith, Sept. 12, 1903
- Inside cover with illustration and title page
- Lesson XXXVIII, What We Have Read About, p. 100
- From the Authors to the Teacher and Language Lessons, pp. 1-3

The Second Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover with illustration and title page
- Lesson II and Lesson III and Lesson IV, pp. 8-11

The Third Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside front cover page with this written in: Edith Cranston, 1896, Abilene, Kansas
- Lesson I, pp. 4-5
- Inside back cover page with: drawings and Edith Cranston, etc.

The Fourth Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with illustration and title page
- IX.—Dan's Bull-fight, pp.31-33
- Appendix: Words Difficult to Spell, p. 287

The Fifth Reader, Appletons' School Readers

- Inside cover page with illustration and title page
- The Preparatory Notes, p. 1
- VII.—The Battle of the Ants, pp. 27-30

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1906 (no pages numbers) Note: Very Fragile

- Course of Study page
- Freshman Toast page (DDE as a freshman)
- Year Calendar page

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1907 (no page numbers in the yearbook)

- High School Faculty page
- High School Orchestra page (Ruby Nelson)
- Sophomore Class page (DDE as a sophomore)
- Sophomore Class page (Motto, Colors, etc.)

- Sophomore Toast page
- School Commandments, Rules and Regulations for Freshman page
- Year Calendar page

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1908, (no page numbers in the yearbook)

- The Junior Class page (DDE as a junior)
- Junior Organization page
- Interior Views of the New High School page
- The Football Team page (photo, Games and Score)
- The Baseball Team (photo, Games and Score)

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1909, (no page numbers in the yearbook)

- Senior Class page with DDE's photo
- Class Prophecy pages (2)
- Senior Organization page (Class Motto, Colors, Flower, Yell, and Officers)
- Class Night Program and Class Play page
- Officers Athletic Association (photo of DDE)
- Athletics by Dwight Eisenhower page
- Abilene High School Base Ball Team (photo)

Abilene High School Yearbook of 1910

- Seniors, p. 15 and 17 (DDE's girlfriends: Gladys Harding, Myrtle Hoffnell, Ruby Nelson)
- A Little into Next Year, p. 27
- Just a Senior Foot Note, p. 60

Photos:

70-255-3	Garfield School
70-255-2	City Building (High School until 1907)
64-320	DDE's 5th grade class at Lincoln (same as 64-321?)
64-321	Emma Wolfe's class (grade?)
62-188-2	DDE's 7th grade class at Garfield
64-380	Class Photo (freshman?)
67-577A	Cropped photo of DDE and student body in front of High School, 1909

Church & Religion

1906 Souvenir Report, Brethren Sunday School (Located at the Heritage Center: See about getting the original for scanning.)

Belle Springs Post Office Application (Located at the Heritage Center. See about using the original for scanning.)

John Long's letter (handwritten), pp. 1-2, to Earl Endacott, March 6, 1970: Home and Family Appendix F (2), Endacott Records.

John Long's reminiscence (attached to above letter), pp. 2-3, March 6, 1970: Home and Family Appendix F (2), Endacott Records.

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 3-4, p. 7, pp. 9-11 pp. 21-23, pp. 28-29, pp. 35-40.

Possibly locate another example or two of church records in Abilene in 1900.

Photos:

- 64-182 The Gospel Wagon (Uncle Abe Eisenhower)
- Brethren in Christ Church, Abilene (Try to locate at the Heritage Center.)
- Belle Springs Brethren in Christ Church (Try to locate at the Heritage Center.)
- 70-255-5 PC Lutheran Church (double check this)
- Locate photos of other churches and/or congregations in Abilene in 1900

Work, Play & Entertainment

Swede Hazlett letter (reminiscence), 23 May 1944, pp. 1-3

Orin Snider Oral History, pp. 39-40

Ivan M. Fitzwater Oral History, pp. 7-9, pp. 11-13, pp. 42-44

L. J. Asper Oral History, p. 1, pp. 4-7, p. 15

Mrs. Robert J. Long Oral History, second-to-last page

Rev. Ray I. Witter Oral History, pp. 19-21, pp. 23-24, pp. 24-27

Abram Forney Oral History, pp. 9-10

Photos:

- 64-165-B Camping Trip to Woodbine
- 77-18-3 Class party (graduation?), 1908-09
- 66-66 With friends at Brown's Park, south of Abilene
- 64-165 Camping Trip on the Smoky Hill River, 1904-07
- 73-503-2 D Picnic at the New Fairgrounds (where they are now) around 1900
- 73-509-3 Abilene Corn Carnival, 1899
- 73-508-1 Abilene Baseball Band, 1900
- 73-508-6 The Merchants' Military Band, 1896
- 70-255-6 Mud Creek? (Very likely) approximately 1905
- 64-481 Belle Springs Creamery, 1902
- 70-255-12 Belle Springs Creamery, approximately 1905
- 64-482-A Belle Springs Creamery, 1908
- 64-482-B Belle Springs Creamery, 1908
- 64-481-B Belle Spring Creamery, 1908
- 70-255-11 Seelye Theater, approximately 1905

Community

Stewart Verckler (newspaper) Abstracts for 1900, pp. 1-6

Abilene Weekly Reflector

- 1/12/99, p. 7, "Statement of Conditions" (cut and paste before scanning)
- 1/19/99, p. 1, "Declared Insane"
- 6/15/99, p. 8, "Exceptional Shoe Bargains"
- 1/12/99, p. 6, Grocery ad
- 6/22/99, p. 1, "Death's Sad Summons"
- 6/15/99, p. 10, "Early June Weddings…" Amsden-Parker (cut and paste before scanning)
- 6/22/99, p. 2, "Farms"
- 6/22/99, p. 2, "Abilene Residences"
- 1/5/99, p. 11, "Railway Time Tables"

Ivan M. Fitzwater Oral History, pp. 4-7, pp. 9-11, pp. 44-45

Orin Snider Oral History, p. 15, pp. 18-19, pp. 33-34

John F. "Six" McDonnell Oral History, pp. 20-22, pp. 52-53

Abram Forney Oral History, p. 6

Standard Atlas of Dickinson Country, KS 1901 (Abilene) Located at the Heritage Center. (Need to take to copy at Kinko's. I don't know if we can scan this size? Perhaps Kinko's can?)

Plat Book and Complete Survey of Dickinson County, KS (Grant Township) 1909 (Probably good enough for scanning. The original is at the Heritage Center.)

Abilene City Directory (with phone book) 1904-04
cover, p. 1, p. 2, pp. 112-115, p. 122-23, pp. 70-71

Andreas History of Kansas, 1883, pp. 46-47 (See about scanning original from Heritage Center)

John Long reminiscence, March 21, 1966, pp. 6-8, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

Map, Boyhood Environmental Area Home, p. 38, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

Eisenhower's West Point Recommendations (Ed Howe's reminiscence), p. 45, Home and Family file, Endacott Records

DDE's 1909 democratic speech (Newspaper account is in the Vertical File, "DDE Boyhood"

Photos:

70-255-1 Dickinson County Court House, approximately 1905
70-255-4 Abilene, looking east on 3rd, approximately 1905

70-255-7	Abilene, looking southwest on 3rd and Broadway, approx. 1905
70-255-8	Abilene, Perhaps the St. Joseph Academy? (identify for certain), approx. 1905
70-255-9	Abilene, looking west on 3rd, approx. 1905
70-255-10	Abilene, (perhaps on south 2nd facing train depot?) approx. 1905
70-255-11	Abilene, approx 1905
70-255-13	Abilene, approx. 1905
73-509	Abilene, Flood of 1903
73-509-4 D	Abilene, Dust Storm, early 1900s
73-509-3 D	Abilene, Corn Carnival, Oct. 12, 1899
73-509-1	Abilene, Lodge Officers, 1896?
73-502-3 D	Abilene, early 1900s
My photo	Abilene in 1911, downtown on west side of Cedar St.,

"To Get Our Hands On Every Cent We Could Possibly Earn"

In the furnace room there were three large fir-tube boilers. We used slack (almost powdered) coal and clinkers formed With a slice bar, twelve feet or so in length, I would push the burning coal to one side,, loosen the clinkers from the grates, then haul them out with a hoelike tool while another man turned a stream of water on the clinker. In this small inferno, life lost its charm but the job led to another promotion.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Children and young people in the early years of the twentieth century worked and played much the same as they do today. Early in life, children learned the value of work firsthand. "These were the days when children had *real* [emphasis added] chores to do and did them as a matter of course."[1] Children learned how to cook, wash and dry dishes, and clean. They helped to wash, hang, and iron laundry as a matter of course. Out of doors, children were responsible for the care of pets and livestock.
Stalls and pens needed cleaning; the garden, hoed and weeded; and the cow, milked twice a day. Local farmers or small business owners hired older boys to work in the summer. Many jobs required long hours of physical toil for very modest pay. During the school year, some students had after-school jobs in downtown stores. When they were old enough to be capable of carrying out their duties, some girls worked as "hired girls," doing household chores for another family in exchange for room, board, and a small wage.

Life for children in 1900 wasn't all work. After chores and schoolwork were finished, children enjoyed play and having fun. Most little girls had a rag doll and perhaps a "penny" doll: a miniature china doll. "Nickel" dolls

were larger and nicer. One popular brand of oatmeal contained a printed, cloth doll in the box that mothers sewed and stuffed for their daughters. Every little girls dreamed of receiving a life-sized doll with a porcelain head, real hair and lashes, and movable eyes. Little boys preferred a cloth bag of prized marbles which they carried around in their pockets. On the first warm day of spring, they gathered outside, testing their skill at marbles with their friends. Older boys were allowed to carry jackknives and competed at a game called "Mumblety-peg" where they turns flipping the knife blades into the ground.

Outside games were as popular as they are today. Children organized themselves to play "hide-and-seek," "ring-around-a-rosy," "drop-the-handkerchief," and "follow-the-leader." Baseball was not considered a proper game for girls; however, it was a favorite sport for boys, along with football, boxing, wrestling, and foot races. The

hayloft in the barn out back was the perfect place to practice gymnastics and put on amateur shows and circuses.

This was a time when children freely explored the countryside in search of fun and adventure. In the summer, the local creek became the community swimming hole and, in winter, an ice-skating rink. Homemade kites flew in the summer sky and many Sunday-afternoon, horse-and-buggy rides ended with a river-side picnic. The river was a perfect setting for fishing, boating, and camping. Hikes and hayrides were other typical outdoor activities in pleasant weather. When there was enough snow in the winter, children hitched their sleds behind a wagon or horse and thrilled to a slippery ride down country roads.

As early as 1890, every town had at least one drugstore with a soda fountain or ice cream parlor. Young people met their friends "downtown" for sodas, sundaes, and malted milks; already American favorites. Another popular activity for young people was to hang out at one another's homes. In the evenings, all gathered around the piano or organ in the parlor for a sing-along to the musical hits of the day. "Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight," "Whippoorwill Song," and "Over the Garden Wall" were among the most requested.

Every town had at least one band; most had several. By far, this was the most popular of all local music entertainment. Dazzling uniforms, the flash of silver instruments, and snappy high-stepping marches were a reflection of the town's own spirit and pride.

Progressive towns boasted an Opera House where traveling troupes performed plays, musicals, and light opera for the locals. By the early 1900s, opera houses were converted to movie theaters at a rapid pace. It was the age of the three-reel, silent picture. Regular admission was 15 to 40 cents, but most fans waited for the Saturday ten-cent matinee to view such blockbusters as "Trip to the Moon" and "The Great Train Robbery."

County fairs and carnivals featured exhibits, horse races, pulling contests, hot-air balloons, and the infamous midway. The occasional medicine show that pulled into town was a sure magnet for a curious, and sometimes gullible crowd. Summer chautauqua shows enticed the community to a week of lectures, speeches, and musical performances. Nothing, however, compared with the glamour of the circus. "The circus was India, Arabia, and the jungles"[1] to Midwesterners who had limited contact with the outside world. Exotic animals, death-defying acts, chariots, and a downtown parade, made the day the circus came to town a major event in small town life.

[1] Lewis Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border, p. 131.

When Dwight Eisenhower was growing up in Abilene, Kansas, the greater part of the ordinary person's day was spent working. Life was no different for the Eisenhower family. As soon as her sons were able to help, Ida devised a weekly schedule of rotating chores. That way, each boy learned every job in the busy household. Because there were no Eisenhower daughters, even what were traditionally "girls" chores like cooking and sewing were mastered by the six sons. After school and in the summers, Dwight and his brothers worked at a variety of jobs including farm and factory work. With his earnings he bought treats, athletic equipment, and took dates to the "picture show" at the Seeyle Theater.

After high school graduation, Dwight

began working fulltime at the Belle Springs Creamery. He and brother Edgar devised a plan to put each other through college. Dwight would remain in Abilene to work and pay for his brother's education. After a couple of years, Ed would drop out to work for a time so Dwight could attend college.

Like young people today, Dwight enjoyed himself when he had the time. He thrilled at pistol-shooting contests down at Mud Creek by men who actually knew Wild Bill Hickok. Now and then, they allowed him to practice. Baseball and football were Dwight's passion and he enjoyed boxing and working out in a make-shift gym at the back of a print shop downtown. He and his friends swam and skated at nearby Mud Creek. With Bob Davis, as guide and teacher, Dwight fished, flat-boat paddled, camped, and learned how to win at poker on the Smoky Hill River. W.C. Parker's Amusement Company and Carnival were only a few blocks from his home, but the people and activity of downtown Abilene were often entertainment enough for a small-town boy growing up at the turn of the century.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 73-75, 68-71, 83-86, 88-92, 94-95, 97-98, 102-104.

HOME & FAMILY

Mother and Father maintained a genuine partnership in raising their six sons. Father was the breadwinner, Supreme Court, and Lord High Executioner. Mother was tutor and manager of our household. Their partnership was ideal . . . Before their children, they were not demonstrative in their love for each other, but a quiet, mutual devotion permeated our home. This had its lasting effect on all the boys.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

In the small, Midwestern town of 1900, the extended family was society's primary unit. Its members were responsible for the welfare of all and everyone could be counted on to help in difficult times. Whether it was misfortune, illness, or death, it was the family that responded. Neighbors and friends were an additional source of help and support. For people of this era, to have sought charity outside the family would have been a disgrace. To be of "good" family—one that reflected the accepted values of the community—was a title worthy of respect in the town.

By today's standards, families were nearly self-sufficient in providing the necessities of life. For many, hard cash may have been scarce; however, most people had adequate clothing, reasonably-comfortable homes and, in ordinary times, an abundance of homegrown food. Every back yard boasted a vegetable garden and chicken pen, a source of fresh food with plenty more to "put up" in the cellar. Anything extra could be sold for pocket money.

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Boys grew up expecting that they would marry and support a wife and children. Girls were raised to view marriage and motherhood as their life's goal. For a young woman, to fail to marry was to be doomed forever to be an "old maid": the object of pity. It was common for extended family members—generally grandparents or unmarried aunts or uncles—to live with relatives. And, if an unfortunate husband or wife was widowed, a minimum of one year of mourning was considered proper before remarriage.

The well-being of the family unit was of far greater concern than the desires of any individual. For this reason, each family member had a role that he or she was expected to fulfill. For example, the husband was undisputed head of the family and chief wage earner. Men expected to work at least 12 hours a day, six days a week, at hard physical labor for very modest pay. Many wives supplemented the family income with "egg and butter" money.

Women were at the center of the family and home. Large families were the rule, demanding creativity and hard work from women. How well a wife and mother carried out her duties of housekeeping, cooking, and laundry was critical to her reputation in the community. Women kept a garden, cared for poultry, made butter, and preserved produce from the garden. All the family's clothing and most of the bedding was sewn by women. Out of necessity, women were skilled practitioners of home medicinal remedies. Every housewife knew that a sore throat required a mixture of turpentine and lard rubbed onto the throat, which was then wrapped with a woolen cloth. To help with the never-ending household tasks, a "hired girl" often lived with the family at a reasonable cost of $1.50--$2.00 a week.

A Day for Everything

Monday—washing
Tuesday—ironing
Wednesday—sewing
Thursday—gardening
Friday—cleaning
Saturday—baking
Sunday—go to church

In 1900, the role of children in the family was different from today. This was an age when, above all else, unquestioned obedience to parents and authority figures was expected. Society supported the view that children were to be "seen and not heard." Mother was the disciplinarian of first resort, but it was father who was the much-feared force of reckoning. The philosophy of "spare the rod and spoil the child" was a universally-accepted belief in homes in 1900.

The typical home in 1900 had two stories with high ceilings and a wide front porch. Homes reflected a preference for Victorian decoration and furnishings. Dark, rich colors covered the walls and windows with similarly-colored rugs on polished, wood floors. Dark tables and walls were covered with lace decoration and bric-a-brac. By this time, many homes in town had electricity,

but unpredictable currents made lighting dim. Each home had a prized front parlor which was furnished with the best the family could afford. Kitchens had a large wood or coal burning stove, a sink, an ice-box, and a large kitchen table. Modern bathtubs in a bathroom were a luxury and most children dreaded the weekly bathing ritual in a large tub on the kitchen floor. Stored in the cellar below the house were bins of apples, onions, and potatoes; and shelves filled with canned fruits and vegetables. Every family tended a vegetable garden and harvested fruit from their own orchards. Even those who lived in town had a barn in the back for the family horse and carriage.

In 1900, the day began with a hearty breakfast of meat, eggs, and potatoes: all fried in lard or butter. Oatmeal with cream, toast or biscuits with homemade butter and jam, was served on the side. The noon meal (dinner) and supper were also large meals. Roast beef, pork, or fried chicken was common with potatoes and gravy, and an assortment of vegetables. Homemade bread and freshly-churned butter rounded out the meal and, for dessert, pie or cake was served. Except for occasional hard candy, junk food was virtually unknown at the turn of the century.

CHURCH & RELIGION

Even by the standard of the day, the Eisenhower home on southeast Fourth Street in Abilene, Kansas, was small, modest, and—with six growing boys underfoot—crowded. From his mother, Ida, Dwight and his brothers learned to cook, clean, and sew. On Sunday, the boys were responsible for family meals entirely. David, their father, worked long hours as a refrigeration engineer at nearby Belle Spring Creamery to support his large family. However, there was never enough money. Ida remade David's old clothes into new garments for the boys and Dwight sometimes had to wear his mother's old, high-top, buttoned shoes to school or go barefoot. To earn money for extras, the Eisenhower boys grew and sold vegetables, door to door. For variety, they made hot tamales from their mother's recipe to sell.

Ida was the enduring influence in their lives. She was a patient teacher and an openly-loving parent who had high standards and lofty expectations for her boys. To their constant delight, she was fun and had a wonderful sense of humor. David was the distant and stern disciplinarian. He was a very formal man and even his work overalls and shirt remained clean and pressed throughout the day. A quiet and studious man, David rarely openly expressed his emotions or affection for his family. In the evenings, he passed the time in the parlor alone, reading and studying. Despite their differences in personality, Idea and David both instilled in their sons the belief that they could become anything they dreamed. All it took was high goals, a good education, and work hard.

"Everybody I Knew Went to Church"

Recommended Readings from *At Ease*: *Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 51-53, 68, 76-82, 93-102, 98-99, 104-106.

The schools were three in number; churches abounded. From memory alone I can identify seven and everybody I knew went to church. (The only exception were people we thought of as the toughs—poolroom sharks, we called them.) Social life was centered around the churches.

Church picnics, usually held on the riverbank, were an opportunity to gorge on fried chicken, potato salad, and apple pie. The men pitched horseshoes, the women knitted and talked, the youngsters fished, and everyone recovered from the meal.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Sunday morning in the Midwestern town of 1900 echoed with a chorus of peeling church bells—a reminder to the faithful to come to worship. The Sabbath was devoted to church services beginning in the morning with Sunday, followed by the regular service, and ending with an evening service. Everyone dressed in their Sunday-go-to-church clothes and children were on their best behavior even when the sermon was beyond their understanding. Singing hymns was a popular part of the service and among the favorites were: "Beulah Land," "Shall We Gather at the River," and "Sweet Bye and Bye." Midweek, usually Wednesday night, was reserved for the midweek prayer meeting and special church group meetings. "Family worship" was stressed and it was not uncommon to see babies sleeping on the back pews during evening services.

Sunday school began with children gathering in a large group in small chairs for opening exercises of prayer and song then they were excused to classes separated by age or gender. Sunday school teachers prepared a lesson about a Biblical scripture and students took turns reading verses from the Bible.

Younger children enjoyed Bible picture cards and pictures on the walls. Meanwhile, the Sunday school secretary-treasurer moved from class to class to collect an offering. At the conclusion, classes were brought together again to announce attendance and the amount collected in the offering. Another hymn was sung, a final pray offered, and Sunday school was dismissed. Adults often attended their own Sunday school where they studied maps of the Holy Land and versus from the Bible.

Town promoters boasted the number and variety of the communities churches. Most churches were protestant and represented the many protestant denominations—a reflection of the population. As a result, most churches had small congregations that had difficulty supporting the costs of a building and the salary of a minister. A congregation of 1000 was necessary to financially support one church; most communities had a church for every 237 people. From time to time, there were efforts by some to promote the idea of a "community" church—a merging of various denominations—but it never gathered enough support to become a reality. There was little real rivalry among the many churches and if the family's church didn't have a Sunday school, no one thought anything about their children attending another.

The vast majority of Midwestern, small-town citizens were middle-class and protestant. It was their religious beliefs which permeated the prevailing code of God-centered, community standards. Few doubted the wisdom of God's "Master Plan" and that everything that happened was for a reason and part of God's great plan. "Belief in God was universal."[1] If a family suffered a death, they sought

[1]Lewis Atherton, Main Street on the Middle Border (Bloomington, IN: University Press), p. 68.

comfort in the understanding that it was "God's will." If misfortunes happened, it was as a seen as a punishment for a lack of faith. The faithful sought to live according to Biblical scripture and prayed for God's help. It was believed that God saw everything a person did—good and bad—and kept an accounting that would be consulted at the end of life. People believed that religion was the underlying strength of a society because devoutness elevated character, improved behavior, and strengthened the family.

The moral code of the middle-class protestant determined certain behaviors and activities to be unacceptable throughout the community. Gambling, card playing, dancing, smoking, and liquor were strictly prohibited. Profanity, immodest dress and behavior received strong societal disapproval. The lower class—termed "ne'er-do-wells" generally ignored the rules of a society they didn't feel a part of and the upper-class suffered no real consequences as long as they did not flaunt violations of proper conduct. In public, all good citizens condemned these evil practices, yet many towns had a saloon for every 200 people in the town—about the same ratio as for churches. Even newspapers printed articles that promoted proper conduct for boys and girls. Respectable young men were to practice personal cleanliness and get to bed early; avoid bad company, drinking, smoking or chewing; attend church; dress and act modestly. To do otherwise was to be a "fast young man." Girls were to act with modesty, seriousness, and thoughtfulness in preparation for marriage and motherhood. Nonetheless, many girls continued their keen interest in clothes and demonstrating the latest slang with risky expressions like: "I thought I should die!" and "Now you're real mean!" One community was particularly concerned about the "bicycle problem"—groups of young people riding bicycles to neighboring towns to visit on Sunday afternoons in clear violation of observing the Sabbath.

"The future life was of paramount importance. It was going home to glory. This life was only a preparation; the earth a place where heavenly reward might be earned and justified.

--D.D.E.

Ministers enjoyed an aura of dignity and respect in the community. Few had a formal education and a minister's salary was meager and undependable, often arriving long after it was due. There were many professional demands. Ministers sometimes performed up to six Sunday services and attended to every detail of a special church event. They performed weddings, baptisms, funerals; made church calls to the bedsides of the sick or dying. Midweek prayer services demanded preparation and they were expected to preside over ice cream socials, W.C.T.U. (Women's Christian Temperance Union) meetings, and holidays like July 4th celebrations and Decoration Day. To supplement their minister's income, parishioners held a yearly donation party and at Christmas, he received Christmas baskets. Small fees were paid for funeral and wedding services and some ministers substitute taught in the local schools.

Small-town ministers had to abide an even stricter code of ethics than did his congregation. There was little or no social life outside church activities. Acceptable associations were lodge activities such as the Odd Fellows, Masons, or Knights of Pythias. Ministers were especially cautious of controversial subjects except those who

strong, spiritual or moral messages walls. that They took care to avoid political controversies or face the strong response of the congregation. His job was made more difficult by the fact that members of the congregation were fond of their own interpretations of the scriptures. It was not unusual for a minister to be dominated by a strong personalities of the congregation and. He had his reputation and good example to counter their strength. There was little stability in ministers' tenure; they tended to stay on a few years and then move on.

In 1900, the churches were the center of social life for the community. Church was a proper place for boys to get to meet girls and, then, walk them home after church. Young people's groups like Christian Endeavor and the Epworth League were well attended. Women met for the Ladies Aid or missionary societies and organized fund-raising and social activities. Church festivals presented entertainment programs to raise money and at Church fairs women sold food and auctioned off donated items. Some churches even held lotteries, although there were always complaints. Church picnics and ice cream socials were well-attended summer pastimes and covered-dish or potluck dinners were held year round.

Summer time brought a wave of revival meetings in the Midwest of 1900. Revivals were a yearly event for many churches. Visiting evangelists preached lively, emotion-filled sermons in tents set up on the outskirts of town. Members of the audience took turns "testifying" about their religious experiences and how they had been "saved," encouraging others to come forward to be converted.

By the 1920s and 30s, the role of the church in the community was undergoing challenges. The code of moral behavior was less strict and people were less willing to follow the example of ministers and the churches. The Sabbath was broken for all kinds of sports activities. Some were openly smoking cigarettes and girls under age 18 were going to dances without their mothers as chaperons. There were even church-sponsored dances. Many blamed the aftermath of the Great War (World War I), for the decline of community morality. As well, the church now had much more competition for social activities and technological progress brought the news of the rest of the world to the small, Midwestern town.

Jacob and Rebecca Eisenhower and their children—including Dwight's father, David—came to Dickinson County, Kansas, from the Susquehanna Valley of Pennsylvania in 1879. They were members of a well-organized and prosperous religious migration by a group that called itself the Brethren in Christ. Although they referred to themselves as the "Plain People," they were more commonly known as the River Brethren in Dickinson County. A devout, hard-working, self-sufficient group, they preferred to live in a close knit community Respected throughout the country for their many, fine qualities, their distinctive clothing set them apart in Dickinson County. The men dressed in black and wore black felt hats. They grew heavy beards, without moustaches and wore their hard long and combed back. Women, also, dressed in black, avoiding decoration of any kind. On their heads the women wore a covering called a "prayer veiling" and, when outside the home, they added large, black bonnets with long skirting along the bottom.

In Dickinson County, the River Brethren established three settlements and transformed the prairie into prosperous farms. They are best remembered for the Belle Springs Creamery, founded in 1885 in southern Dickinson County and moved to Abilene in the early 1890s. David

Eisenhower returned to Abilene with Ida and his three young sons (Dwight then the youngest) in 1892 from Texas to work at the Belle Springs Creamery. For two years following his graduation from high school, to, Dwight worked at the Creamery to earn money to put his brother, Edgar, through college.

SCHOOL & EDUCATION

"Education in the Small-Town View"

In the fall of 1896, I entered the Lincoln school, little aware that I was starting on a road in formal education which would not terminate until 1929 when I finished courses at the Army's War College in Washington, D.C. What I learned at the start would not remain static. In the third of a century between my first and last school was compressed a series of revolution—political and economic, social and scientific—which were to transform the human environment of the entire globe.

--Dwight D. Eisenhower

Going to school in a small, Midwestern town 100 years ago was, in some respects, very different from today; in other, little has changed. The goal of public education, about 1900, was not to prepare young people for a career, as it is today. Rather, students labored to perfect their Spencerian penmanship and they struggled to master the basics of spelling, reading, and "ciphering" (arithmetic)—what we term the "three R's" today. Most members of the community agreed that common sense and hard work rounded out a "good" grammar-school education.

Religious education was a focus of the public school curriculum. The school day began with the teacher reading a Bible verse to the class. McGuffey's popular textbooks were filled with stories and poems that taught religious and moral lessons. Another common theme was "civic virtue," what we call good citizenship today. Parents had a duty to insure a "proper" education for their children and, in turn, obedience and devotion to parents were values that were taught in school.

Classes began at 9:00 in the morning; however, before-school chores began before daylight. Deane Malott, an Abilene boy born to a prosperous, "north side" family in 1898, recalls cleaning the "clinkers" from the furnace; building a fire in the kitchen stove; feeding and currying the horses; feeding the chickens and gathering eggs; cleaning the barn and the henhouse; feeding the dog; hitching up the horse; and practicing the piano—all before leaving for school in the morning. The first bell of the day rang at 8:30. A second, at 9:00, signaled students to line up at the school doors and march, single file, to their classes.

Classrooms were often dark and dreary places that buzzed with the steady hum of student recitations. The competitive spirit of a spelling bee helped to break the monotony

and a discipline problem for the teacher became lively entertainment for the class. Because school kitchens did not exists, students walked home for lunch and returned for the afternoon session. It wasn't considered proper for boys and girls to share the same playground so they were separated for recess.

By in large, Kansans of 1900 were a literate population; however, relatively few completed a four-year high school education. In the early years of the twentieth century, an eight-grade education was considered adequate and it was certainly no disgrace to leave school after the fifth or sixth grade. High school was, then, largely a female domain because only girls enrolled in the "normal" training program to prepare to teach in rural, one-room schools in the surrounding area. For boys, it was far more practical to get a job, unless they planned to go on to college to become doctors or lawyers. High school was, quite simply, an impractical luxury for many.

High schools offered a choice of four courses of study: college prep, commercial (business), normal training, and an industrial (vocational) track. A typical daily schedule of classes
included Latin or German, English, algebra, and physical geography. The teachers and, occasionally, the school superintendent, took turn leading Bible devotions in what was called "chapel." From time to time, the superintendent visited classrooms as a highly-visible deterrent to bad behavior.

Students of this era participated in many of the same activities as high school students today. They wrote and acted in plays and musicals; worked on the yearbook; played an instrument; belonged to a variety of clubs; enrolled in debate; and competed in sports like baseball and football. Basketball was popular with the girls. Neither the school nor citizens took much interest in school athletics. Students who wanted to play a sport bought their own uniforms and personal equipment. Money for other sport-related expenses was raised through meager membership dues and gate receipts.

Teaching wasn't considered a real profession nor did teachers make much money. A college education and professional training were not requirements for grammar school teaching. High school teachers generally had a college degree. In addition to a basic proficiency in the three R's, a teacher was expected to ". . . whip the bullies into submission . . . and hold his own against the district's champion in ciphering and spelling matches."[1] Teachers were expected to be upstanding role models in their communities: demonstrated by regular church attendance and a strict prohibition against participating in card playing, dancing, or profanity. Not surprising, in many communities, the turnover rate for teachers was very high.

[1]Lewis Atherton, *Main Street on the Middle Border* (Bloomington, IN: University Press), 1954: p. 25.

Dwight Eisenhower was an intelligent boy who sometimes found school to be dull. Nonetheless, his academic record reveals very respectable grades. In the Eisenhower home, getting a good education was a priority and all six boys were encouraged to go on to college; highly unusual for the time. In grade school, Dwight's favorite subject was spelling, followed closely by arithmetic. His worst subject was penmanship and, throughout his life, he was famous for his indicipherable scrawl. During high school, he excelled at geometry, so much so that his teacher allowed him to develop his own theorems.

Dwight's real academic passion was reserved for reading history books, especially ancient history and biographies of famous military men. As a boy, he needed no encouragement to read. In fact, his mother, Ida, finally resorted to locking his books in a cabinet—which he unlocked at his pleasure when he discovered the key—because he read, neglecting his chores. Dwight loved sports, especially football and baseball. At Abilene High School, he resurrected the Athletic Association and worked tirelessly to make it a success. Dwight's ambition for a college education and his willingness to study and work hard changed his life profoundly from what it might have been.

Recommended Reading from *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*: 36-37, 39-43, 68, 77-82, 93-102, 98